**Appendix A:**

**Abuse Categories and Definitions**

**Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect**

The following definitions are based on those identified in Working Together to Safeguard Children and Keeping Children Safe in Education:

**Abuse**

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Physical Abuse**

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Emotional Abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

**Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

a. provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)

b. protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger

c. ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)

d. ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

These definitions are used when determining significant harm and children can be affected by combinations of maltreatment and abuse, which can be impacted on by for example domestic violence and abuse in the household or a cluster of problems faced by the adults.

In addition, research analysing Serious Case Reviews has demonstrated a significant prevalence of domestic abuse in the history of families with children who are subject of Child Protection Plans. Children can be affected by seeing, hearing and living with domestic violence and abuse as well as being caught up in any incidents directly, whether to protect someone or as a target. It should also be noted that the age group of 16 and 17 year olds have been found in recent studies to be increasingly affected by domestic violence in their peer relationships.

**Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse. Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and adolescent to parent violence. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home. Domestic abuse continues to be a prevalent risk factor identified through children social care assessments for children in need. Domestic abuse has a significant impact on children and young people. Children may experience domestic abuse directly, as victims in their own right, or indirectly due to the impact the abuse has on others such as the non-abusive parent.

More information can be found in the Draft Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance Framework, including the new statutory definition of domestic abuse that will be introduced when the Domestic Abuse Bill is enacted.

**Controlling or Coercive behaviour**

Also known as coercive control, the use of control and coercion in relationships is a form of domestic abuse and, since December 2015, a criminal offence.

Controlling and coercive behaviour is outlined in Government guidance issued under section 77 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 as part of the Government’s non-statutory definition of domestic violence and abuse. It is described as:

• Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour; and

• Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

Coercive control is a form of abuse that involves multiple behaviours and tactics which reinforce each other and are used to isolate, manipulate and regulate the victim. This pattern of abuse creates high levels of anxiety and fear. This has a significant impact on children and young people, both directly, as victims in their own right, and indirectly due to the impact the abuse has on the non-abusive parent. Children may also be forced to participate in controlling or coercive behaviour towards the parent who is being abused.

Controlling or coercive behaviour also form part of the definition of domestic abuse in section 1(3)(c) of the Domestic Abuse Bill. More information can be found in the Draft Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance Framework.

It should therefore be considered in responding to concerns that the Home Office definition of domestic violence and abuse (2013) is as follows:

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence and abuse between those aged 16 or over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender and sexuality.

This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

* Psychological;
* Physical;
* Sexual;
* Financial;
* Emotional.

**Potential Risk of Harm to an Unborn Child**

In some circumstances, agencies or individuals are able to anticipate the likelihood of significant harm with regard to an expected baby (e.g. where there is information known about domestic violence, parental substance misuse or mental ill health).

These concerns should be addressed as early as possible before the birth, so that a full assessment can be undertaken and support offered to enable the parent/s (wherever possible) to provide safe care to the baby.

**There are also other types of abuse that you need to be aware of.**

**Online abuse** is any type of abuse that happens on the internet, across any device connected to the web (computers, mobile phones, tablets). Online abuse can happen anywhere online e.g. social media, text/messaging apps, emails, online chats, online gaming and live-streaming sites.

**Grooming** which is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with another person so that they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE**) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

**Female Genital Mutilation** which is when a female’s genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It is also known as ‘cutting’ or ‘female circumcision’.

**Bullying** which is behaviour that includes name calling, spreading rumours, hitting, pushing, undermining or threatening someone – behaviour that hurts someone else.

**Cyberbullying** which is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying in the real world, online bullying can follow the person wherever they go via social networks, email, text etc.

**What constitutes abuse and neglect in adults?**

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

The view of what constitutes abuse or neglect should not be limited, as they can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered. Exploitation, in particular, is a common theme in the following list of the types of abuse and neglect.

**Physical abuse including:**

* assault
* hitting
* slapping
* pushing
* misuse of medication
* restraint
* inappropriate physical sanctions

**Domestic violence including:**

* psychological
* physical
* sexual
* financial
* emotional abuse
* so called ‘honour’ based violence

**Sexual abuse including:**

* rape
* indecent exposure
* sexual harassment
* inappropriate looking or touching
* sexual teasing or innuendo
* sexual photography
* subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts
* indecent exposure
* sexual assault
* sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting

**Psychological abuse including:**

* emotional abuse
* threats of harm or abandonment
* deprivation of contact
* humiliation
* blaming
* controlling
* intimidation
* coercion
* harassment
* verbal abuse
* cyber bullying
* isolation
* unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks

**Financial or material abuse including:**

* theft
* fraud
* internet scamming
* coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions
* the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

**Modern slavery encompasses:**

* slavery
* human trafficking
* forced labour and domestic servitude.
* traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment

Read [Modern slavery: how the UK is leading the fight](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/328096/Modern_slavery_booklet_v12_WEB__2_.pdf) for further information.

**Discriminatory abuse including forms of:**

* harassment
* slurs or similar treatment:
* because of race
* gender and gender identity
* age
* disability
* sexual orientation
* religion

Read [Discrimination: your rights](https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights/types-of-discrimination) for further information.

**Organisational abuse**

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Neglect and acts of omission including:**

* ignoring medical
* emotional or physical care needs
* failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services
* the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

**Self-neglect**

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. It should be noted that self-neglect may not prompt a section 42 enquiry. An assessment should be made on a case by case basis. A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on the adult’s ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this, without external support.

Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems and of what is described as organisational abuse. In order to see these patterns it is important that information is recorded and appropriately shared.

Patterns of abuse vary and include:

* serial abuse, in which the perpetrator seeks out and ‘grooms’ individuals. Sexual abuse sometimes falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse
* long-term abuse, in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between spouses or generations or persistent psychological abuse
* opportunistic abuse, such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around

**Domestic abuse**

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

* psychological
* sexual
* financial
* emotional

A new offence of coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate and familial relationships was introduced into the Serious Crime Act 2015. The offence will impose a maximum 5 years imprisonment, a fine or both.

The offence closes a gap in the law around patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour during a relationship between intimate partners, former partners who still live together, or family members, sending a clear message that it is wrong to violate the trust of those closest to you, providing better protection to victims experiencing continuous abuse and allowing for earlier identification, intervention and prevention.

The offence criminalising coercive or controlling behaviour was commenced on 29 December 2015. Read the [accompanying statutory guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-guidance-framework-controlling-or-coercive-behaviour-in-an-intimate-or-family-relationship) for further information.

**Financial abuse**

Financial abuse is the main form of abuse investigated by the Office of the Public Guardian both amongst adults and children at risk. Financial recorded abuse can occur in isolation, but as research has shown, where there are other forms of abuse, there is likely to be financial abuse occurring. Although this is not always the case, everyone should also be aware of this possibility.

Potential indicators of [financial abuse](http://www.cpa.org.uk/information/reviews/financialabuse240408%5B1%5D.pdf) include:

* change in living conditions
* lack of heating, clothing or food
* inability to pay bills/unexplained shortage of money
* unexplained withdrawals from an account
* unexplained loss/misplacement of financial documents
* the recent addition of authorised signers on a client or donor’s signature card
* sudden or unexpected changes in a will or other financial documents

This is not an exhaustive list, nor do these examples prove that there is actual abuse occurring. However, they do indicate that a closer look and possible investigation may be needed. Read report on [The Financial Abuse of Older People](http://www.cpa.org.uk/information/reviews/financialabuse240408%5B1%5D.pdf)

Internet scams, postal scams and doorstep crime are more often than not, targeted at adults at risk and all are forms of financial abuse. These scams are becoming ever more sophisticated and elaborate. For example:

* internet scammers can build very convincing websites
* people can be referred to a website to check the caller’s legitimacy but this may be a copy of a legitimate website
* postal scams are massed-produced letters which are made to look like personal letters or important documents
* doorstep criminals call unannounced at the adult’s home under the guise of legitimate business and offering to fix an often non-existent problem with their property. sometimes they pose as police officers or someone in a position of authority

In all cases this is financial abuse and the adult at risk can be persuaded to part with large sums of money and in some cases their life savings. These instances should always be reported to the local police service and local authority Trading Standards Services for investigation.

These scams and crimes can seriously affect the health, including mental health, of an adult at risk.

Where the abuse is perpetrated by someone who has the authority to manage an adult’s money, the relevant body should be informed - for example, the Office of the Public Guardian for deputies or attorneys and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in relation to appointees.

If anyone has concerns that a DWP appointee is acting incorrectly, they should contact the DWP immediately. Note that the DWP can get things done more quickly if it also has a National Insurance number in addition to a name and address. However, people should not delay acting because they do not know an adult’s National Insurance number. The important thing is to alert DWP to their concerns. If DWP knows that the person is also known to the local authority, then it should also inform the relevant authority.

Abuse by an attorney or deputy

If someone has concerns about the actions of an attorney acting under a registered enduring power of attorney (EPA) or lasting power of attorney (LPA), or a deputy appointed by the Court of Protection, they should contact the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG). The OPG can investigate the actions of a Deputy or Attorney and can also refer concerns to other relevant agencies. When it makes a referral, the OPG will make sure that the relevant agency keeps it informed of the action it takes. The OPG can also make an application to the Court of Protection if it needs to take possible action against the attorney or deputy. Whilst the OPG primarily investigates financial abuse, it is important to note that that it also has a duty to investigate concerns about the actions of an attorney acting under a health and welfare Lasting Power of Attorney or a personal welfare deputy. The OPG can investigate concerns about an attorney acting under a registered EPA or LPA, regardless of the adult’s capacity to make decisions. Read about the role and powers of the OPG and its policy in relation to adult safeguarding.